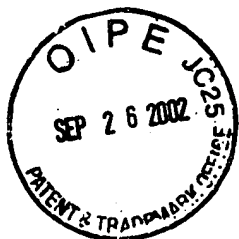


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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Inventors: Muneki SHIMADA
Shinichi OKAMOTO
Masaharu YOSHIMORI
Tsutomu INUI

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Examiner: -----

Group Art Unit: 2131

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PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

SIR:

The above-referenced patent application was filed on February 20, 2002.

Prior to any further action on the merits, please amend the subject application as

follows:

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